

Message Text

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ACTION HA-05

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-12 NEA-10 IO-13 ISO-00 SSO-00
NSCE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 AID-05
OMB-01 TRSE-00 FDRE-00 AGRE-00 /094 W
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O 241608Z FEB 78
FM USMISSION GENEVA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6415
INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY RABAT PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY MADRID
AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT
AMEMBASSY PARIS
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L GENEVA 02962

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: SREF, UNHCR, SS AG
SUBJECT: SAHARA REFUGEES: SITUATION AT TIME OF UNHCR'S
VISIT TO WASHINGTON

REF: A. STATE 27988; B. GENEVA 1758; C. RABAT 1041;
D. ALGIERS 601

1. UNHCR DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF ASSISTANCE CUENOD REVIEWED
WITH MISOFF FEBRUARY 24 CURRENT SITUATION WITH RESPECT
TO SAHARAN REFUGEES AS PERCEIVED BY UNHCR.

2. CUENOD STATED THAT PRINCIPAL DIFFICULTIES STILL
OPERATING AGAINST UNHCR IN ATTEMPTING TO COME TO GRIPS
WITH PROBLEM ARE:

A. INADEQUACY OF REPORTS FROM ALGERIAN GOVERNMENT CON-
CERNING REFUGEES. ALTHOUGH SOME REPORTS ARE BEING RE-
CEIVED, THEIR CONTENT AND DATA ARE INSUFFICIENT TO SATISFY
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UNHCR NEEDS.
B. GOA'S REFUSAL TO PERMIT UNHCR VISITS TO CAMPS IN
NUMBERS AND DEPTH CONSIDERED NECESSARY.
C. ALGERIA'S CONTINUING REFUSAL TO APPLY FOR AVAILABLE
WFP ASSISTANCE, AND ITS CONCURRENT REQUESTS, DESPITE THIS
REFUSAL, TO SEEK FUNDS FOR FOOD.

OTHERWISE, CUENOD'S REPORT ON SITUATION CORRESPONDED VERY CLOSELY TO THAT SET FORTH IN REF D.

3. CUENOD STATED THAT DURING HIS INITIAL COURTESY CALL ON UN HIGH COMMISSIONER HARTLING JANUARY 17, ALGERIAN AMBASSADOR BOUDJAKDJI HAD AGREED THAT THE ALGERIAN GOVERNMENT WOULD NOT PRESS UNHCR ON THE MATTER OF ASSISTANCE FOR SAHARAN REFUGEES UNTIL AFTER HARTLING HAD COMPLETED HIS INITIAL TRIPS TO SOUTHERN AFRICA, THE UNITED STATES, CANADA, NEW ZEALAND AND AUSTRALIA. IT WAS AGREED THAT HARTLING AND BOUDJAKDJI WOULD DISCUSS THIS MATTER FURTHER AFTER HARTLING HAD HAD AN OPPORTUNITY TO REVIEW BACKGROUND IN DETAIL, THAT IS, SOMETIME IN LATE MARCH OR EARLY APRIL.

4. AS CONCERNS PARA 3D, REF D, CUENOD VOLUNTARILY CONFIRMED UNHCR'S UNHAPPINESS OVER THE REPORTING (OR LACK OF) BY ITS WORKING PARTNER, THE ALGERIAN RED CRESCENT. FOR INSTANCE, HE SAID, THE DUTCH HAVE PROVIDED 50,000 GILDERS FOR RELIEF TO THE REFUGEES, OF WHICH 300,000 IS TO BE FOR FOOD PURCHASES IN HOLLAND BY THE GOVERNMENT AND 250,000 FOR VEHICLES FROM ANY SOURCE. ALTHOUGH THIS OFFER IS OF LONG STANDING, THE ALGERIAN RED CRESCENT HAS FAILED TO COME FORWARD WITH SPECIFICATIONS OF TYPES AND QUANTITIES OF FOOD NEEDED, AS WELL AS FOR MAKES AND SPECIFICATIONS OF VEHICLES. SIMILARLY, THE SWEDISH SAVE THE CHILDREN FUND (RADDA BARNEN), HAS OFFERED \$125,000 FOR FOOD TO BE

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PURCHASED IN ALGERIA, BUT AGAIN ACTION HAS BEEN STYMIED BY THE RED CRESCENT'S FAILURE TO SUBMIT DETAILS OF NEEDS. CUENOD ADDED THAT THE SPANISH HAVE JUST COME FORWARD WITH AN OFFER OF 67 MILLION PESETAS FOR REFUGEE ASSISTANCE, INCLUDING FOOD, MEDICAL SUPPLIES, SHELTER, CLOTH "AND OTHER NEEDS", ALL OF WHICH ARE TO BE PURCHASED IN SPAIN.
VANDEN HEUVEL

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: REFUGEES, VISITS, POLITICAL SITUATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 24 feb 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978GENEVA02962
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780086-0465
Format: TEL
From: GENEVA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780218/aaaaaoqz.tel
Line Count: 101
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 47d538d0-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION HA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 STATE 27988, 78 GENEVA 1758, 78 RABAT 1041, 78 ALGIERS 601
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 27 apr 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3491031
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SAHARA REFUGEES: SITUATION AT TIME OF UNHCR'S VISIT TO WASHINGTON
TAGS: SREF, SS, AG, UNHCR
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/47d538d0-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014